

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Religious, Political and Economic Developments

DATE DISTR. 25 Nov 1953

NO. OF PAGES 2

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The government failed to honor the agreement with the church signed in 1950. In spring 1953 a law was promulgated which provides that all cures (catholic priests) must be confirmed by the National Councils of the respective Voivodes. No cure is allowed to officiate without special consent by the government. The same ordinance applies to Bishops and Archbishops. The entire church hierarchy is subjected to absolute control by the authorities. The rage and hatred of the Catholic population against these awful restrictions has still increased. A certain number of clergymen let themselves be led to collaborate with the government authorities but practically, however, considering their very limited number and their insignificance, their action in favor of the government has shown no results.

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The Western territories are well organized as far as agriculture is concerned and their industrial level is higher than it was before World War II. In addition, new steel plants were built in the vicinity of Stettin and one of the largest sulfuric acid plants in Europe is located in Wladow, lower Silesia. Seven million Poles have been settled in these territories. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the result of Communist economy, the disorder and corrupt bureaucracy as well as widespread lawlessness are poor elements to promote economic development there as well as in all other areas of Poland. The expression "lawlessness" means that the authorities fail to respect the laws and ordinances now in force in spite of the fact that the Diet ("Sejm") and the Polish Communist government are responsible for having promulgated them.

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In answer to this question I can say only that the Beria case has caused a terrible confusion among Polish Communists but that within a few days some semblance of order was "reestablished" in their thinking as a result of an information campaign launched by the Polish Communist Party (PZPR), by means of countless articles, huge rallies, meetings in public establishments and enterprises, etc. I emphasize that the fall

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of Beria has been the occasion for exuberant joy and great hopes that it may lead to a revolution in the interior of the USSR. These sentiments were shared by all the Polish people except those who have become fanatical members of the Communist Party.

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The Poles are generally of the opinion that the USSR will act in this respect in such a manner as it sees fit without bothering to consider Polish interests. There is no faith in sincerity on the part of the Soviets in the question of a united Germany. On the contrary, the Poles are convinced that these maneuvers are only political tactical devices and that in reality the USSR would like to continue exerting its power and influence over Eastern Germany as long as possible.

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I can only say that the pressure exerted over the remnants of private enterprise, ie, the small stores and shops owned by merchants and artisans where the latter follow their trade without the benefit of paid help, has been relaxed during the summer of 1953.

It would be a mistake, however, if one would believe the Communists were about to shelve their economic politics. It is just the opposite that will happen. It is generally believed that this temporary leniency will soon be followed by new restrictions and that the artisan trade will be compelled to join a cooperative and then the last free merchants will be eliminated. I may add that at least 50% of the artisan trade is already organized in cooperatives. These artisans consist of shoemakers, carpenters, interior decorators, locksmiths, plumbers, barbers, tailors, house-painters etc. I wish to state again that regarding this matter as well as all others, I express myself only with reference to subjects known to me and only to the extent they are known to me.

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